



Bayfield County Administrator

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**Minutes of the:
Bayfield County Ad-Hoc Business Park Planning Committee
Wednesday, June 21st, 2023 – 1:30 p.m.
Meeting Held at the Town of Eileen Town Hall**

Call to Order: The Bayfield County Ad Hoc Business Park Planning County was called to order at 1:36 p.m. by **Committee Chairman Rabska**.

Members Present: Leo Carlson, Preston Mikula, Mark Abeles-Allison, Cole Rabska, and Marty Milanowski

Members Excused: Ken Disher and Jake Hipsher

Others Present: Bruce Markgren- *Cooper Engineering President* and Paige Terry-*Clerk III*

Introductions: Introductions of committee members were made.

Public Comment: None

Minutes from February 14, 2023: *Motion by Milanowski, seconded by Mikula to adopt the minutes of the February 14, 2023 Bayfield County Ad-Hoc Business Park meeting as presented. Motion Carried.*

Cooper Engineering Utility Feasibility Study Update: Cooper Engineering President, Bruce Markgren, reported that the business park currently had space for 21 additional potential customers and explained that was not a lot of customers compared to the costs of expenditures. There is a lot of potential for a sanitary district for the town. More than 60 homes are located around the business park that could make the project more feasible if more interest could be generated. Abeles-Allison explained that the parcels are currently sized at 10 acres but could be decreased to two- or three-acre parcels if utilities are included. Markgren stated that the corridor is a decent location for running a sewer and/or water transmission line. Markgren reviewed the options for getting utilities to the business park. clarified the property in question.

Options included:

1. Gravity Sewer System
2. Pressure Sewer System
3. Connecting to the Northern Great Lakes Visitor's Center

4. Sceptic Drainage Field

Mikula suggested talking to the City of Ashland to ask how much water/sewer volume they are willing to take on before any building is started. Markgren estimated it would cost \$500,000 to get sewer to the starting line and \$1.1 million for get water to the starting line for a total of \$1.6 million for both. A gravity sewer system with lift collection would cost a total of approximately \$2.5 million. Markgren suggested the next step involve seeing if there is any interest in a town sanitary district. The committee discussed the option of moving forward with a large sceptic drainage field system. Markgren stated that he would do more research on cost comparisons.

2:35 p.m. – Bruce Markgren left the meeting.

KV Build Welcome: Rabska reported that he has been attempting to work with KV Build on a ribbon cutting ceremony, but they have not shown any excitement in such an event and Abeles-Allison has suggested bringing them a gift basket instead. Abeles-Allison suggested delivering the welcome basket after the next Business Park Meeting. The committee agreed.

Sign Installation on Hwy 137 and State Farm Road: Rabska informed the committee that the previous bid from Copy That was approximately \$3,800 for header sign design, tenant signs, and installation. Rabska stated that prices have since increase and a new bid/quote is now needed. The committee agreed with moving forward with getting a final quote from Copy That and asking Copy That to install the signs.

Replacing Existing Business Park Banner: Rabska stated the banner on Hwy 137 and State Farm Road is in disrepair and needs to be replaced. *Motion by Abeles-Allison, seconded Milanowski to authorize the replacement of the banner at State Highway 137 and State Farm Road. Motion carried.*

Xcel Lease Update: Abeles-Allison reported that the lease has been extended for an additional five years and the extension includes a clause that will require Xcel to cover the costs of restoring the parcel without having to restore it themselves. Abeles-Allison explained that the cost of the lease along with the cost to restore the parcel to is original state would give the county approximately \$300,000 in funds that may be put towards the costs of extending the road at the business park.

Business Park Road Extension: Abeles-Allison reviewed the tabulated bids that were received. Estimates for the entire road is estimated to have increase 30% from the previously estimated \$510,000.

Closed Session: *Motion by Milanowski, seconded by Mikula, to enter Executive/Closed Session at 2:49 p.m. Motion carried.*

Discussion took place regarding Future Land Sale Negotiations.

There being no further business to conduct in Executive/Closed Session, *a motion was made by Milanowski, seconded by Carlson, to return to Open Session at 3:02 p.m. Motion carried.*

3:03 p.m. - Mark Abeles-Allison and Paige Terry left the meeting.

SSG Pilot Program: The committee discussed the SSG/WEDC pilot program as well as associated fees and potential fees for studies/surveys. Other sites in the program have reported costs of the due diligence items averaging \$10,000 per study/survey. The Bayfield County business park currently has 6 surveys/studies that would need to either be updated or completed and documents are only valid for 5-10 years with expired documents needing to be redone to stay in compliance. Rabska informed the committee that, based on information provided, it could cost the business park \$100,000 over a 10-year period to stay in compliance.

Rabska reported that he asked the WEDC about the amount of website traffic to the certified sites page and the WEDC gave him an estimate of 1,500+ visitors over a 12-month period to their website. Rabska stated the amount of traffic appears to be very minimal. Five companies submitted RFIs in the Month of May and received the requested documents regardless of their standing as a certified site. Further discussion was held about the minimal website traffic, recent RFI requests, increased local interest, the potential of Fleet Farm creating more interest once opened, potential costs of the studies, and if the WEDC Certified Site program is worth the costs associated with the program. The committee decided to move forward with the \$7,500 SSG fee, which was previously approved by the Bayfield County Executive Committee, but to cease any further activities regarding the certification.

Shipping Warehouse Needs in Wisconsin: Rabska reported he attended a meeting with the Duluth Port Authority, APEX, and regional partners pertaining to the Port Authority looking for more warehousing space for manufacturing companies. The Duluth area is running out of space for warehouses that would hold manufactured goods and the goods are now in a temporary spot until they can be transported to Duluth. Rabska informed the committee that he received estimates that explained that warehousing unit employs an average of 1 person per 10,000 sqft of space but he did not receive information on how much rent income comes with a building or an explanation on the ownership of the building or land. Private-public partnerships prevent the Port Authority from accessing that information. Rabska had expressed concerns to the Port Authority regarding giving up valuable land for a warehouse that created minimal jobs and did not increase tax revenue. The Port Authority stated that the area would benefit from the increased production of manufacturers and a decision should not be made based on tax revenue or job creation.

Discussion was had amongst the committee about who would benefit from this type of warehousing in the area that hires residents of Bayfield County and the immediate counties. It was noted that the impact would be felt in other regions of the state; however, the Bayfield County residents and communities would not greatly benefit from a warehouse taking up large tracts of land. After discussion, the committee decided that the area would experience minimal beneficial impact and the business park land would be better suited for business moving into or expanding in the area. While the warehouse could prove beneficial to businesses in the area, the committee did not feel that the business park was an appropriate location.

Adjournment: Next Meeting: August 16, 2023 at 1:30 PM. There being no further business to come before the Bayfield County Ad-Hoc Business Park Planning Committee, *Committee Chairman, Rabska adjourned the meeting at 3:10 p.m.*

Respectfully submitted,

Paige Terry, Clerk III